

Specific Personality Assessments

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WHAT'S COVERED

This lesson is going to look at specific examples of assessments in two different groups:

1. Objective Tests
 - a. Minnesota Multiphasic Inventory
 - b. Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator'
2. Projective Tests
 - a. Rorschach Inkblot Test
 - b. Thematic Apperception Test

1. Objective Tests

Objective tests are tests that give the same questions and measures for each person that takes these tests. They also result in the same scores, even when different people score them.

1a. Minnesota Multiphasic Inventory

One famous objective personality test is a personality questionnaire called the **Minnesota Multiphasic Inventory**, or MMPI, Version 2. This is a test that was first developed in the 1930s to 1940s and was revised into its second edition in 1989.

The MMPI is a self-report inventory, which means that it is a questionnaire that a person takes individually, based on a list of questions. There are 567 different items or questions, and all of them are answered true or false. Within that test, there are 10 different scales that measure different aspects of personality like emotionality, anxiety, or paranoia.

🔗 **EXAMPLE** An example of a question on the MMPI is, "I do not always tell the truth, true or false?"



TERM TO KNOW

Minnesota Multiphasic Inventory (MMPI-2)

Objective test, most widely researched and clinically used of all personality tests

1b. Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator

The Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator, or MBTI, is another famous questionnaire that is based on Carl Jung's theories that measure a person based on four different personality scales, like introversion versus extroversion, to see where they fall within that rating.

From these four scales, it matches a person to one of the 16 different personality types to determine what type of person they are.

2. Projective Tests

In addition to objective tests, there are also what are called projective tests. These tests use ambiguous words or images to try to uncover unconscious thoughts or desires and are focused on psychodynamic theories and the importance of the unconscious on our personalities.

2a. Rorschach Inkblot Test

The **Rorschach inkblot test** is a famous projective test that was created in 1921 by the Swiss psychologist Hermann Rorschach. It's one of the most commonly used today and is generally used in conjunction with other ones.

People are shown 10 standard inkblot pictures, and they are asked what they see. The psychologist records what the person says, as well as what the person does. It doesn't matter how important the person thinks it is. The psychologist records everything that they see and hear.

The psychologist is much less focused on the content of the people's answers. While it might be important if they talk about something especially violent, this isn't necessarily the focus of the psychologist.

The psychologist is more focused on the organization of the person's answers, referring to what parts of the inkblot they look at first or second. They are also focused on the determinant: what triggered their answers? Was it the color? Was it the shape? These answers can give clues to the unconscious mind.

Psychologists use a standardized scoring system to come up with responses about the person's personality, called the Exner Scoring System.



TERM TO KNOW

Rorschach Inkblot Test

Projective test in which the evaluator presents "inkblots" to the subject to assess personality, cognitive disorders, etc.

2b. Thematic Apperception Test

Another well-known projective test is the **Thematic Apperception Test (T.A.T.)**, which is also a pictorial test. It was first created in the 1930s by two psychologists, Henry Murray and Christiana Morgan. In this test, a subject is shown a picture of a neutral kind of scene.

There isn't anything that necessarily gives away how the people are thinking and feeling. They are asked what happened before the scene, what's happening in the scene now, how the person is feeling or thinking,

and what happens next after the scene. Basically, they're trying to create a story out of this one picture.

Scoring for the T.A.T. is not necessarily as standardized as the Rorschach test. There are multiple systems that people use. Mainly, the systems are based on the needs, the motivations, and the anxieties of the characters within the story, which might reflect what the test subject is feeling. The purpose of the test is to try to uncover the person's own feelings and motivations in their unconscious, particularly about their relationships towards other people.



TERM TO KNOW

Thematic Apperception Test (T.A.T.)

Projective test in which the evaluator presents ambiguous scenes to subject to assess personality, motivation, achievement, defense mechanisms, etc.



SUMMARY

Objective tests are tests that give the same results, even when different people score them. They provide the same questions and measures to the people who take them. Examples of objective tests are the MMPI (Version 2) or the MBTI.

Projective tests use ambiguous words or images to try to uncover the subject's unconscious thoughts or desires. Examples of projective tests are the Rorschach inkblot test and the Thematic Apperception Test (T.A.T.).

Good luck!

Source: This work is adapted from Sophia author Erick Taggart.



TERMS TO KNOW

Minnesota Multiphasic Inventory (MMPI-2)

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Rorschach Inkblot Test

Projective test in which the evaluator presents "inkblots" to subject to assess personality, cognitive disorders, etc.

Thematic Apperception Test (T.A.T.)

Projective test in which the evaluator presents ambiguous scenes to subject to assess personality, motivation, achievement, defense mechanisms, etc.